

Thirty *of Matters*
Important CASES,

Resolved
With Evidence of

Scripture
AND
Reason.

[Mostly,]

By several Pastors of Adjacent Churches,
meeting in CAMBRIDGE,
NEW-ENGLAND.

[With some other memorable matters.]

Now Published for
General Benefit.

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Trinity & St. Mary

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JOSEPH BARNES



Advertisement.

IT is a Considerable point in, *The Heads of Agreement*, lately Voted among the United Ministers,, formerly called *Presbyterian* and *Congregational*, in the *English Nation*; ' That the *Pastors* of Particular Churches ' ought to have frequent Meetings together, ' that by mutual Advice, Support, Encouragement, and Brotherly Intercourte, they may ' strengthen the Hearts and Hands of each ' other, in the wayes of the Lord; And, That ' the Particular Churches, their Respective Elders and Members, ought to have a Reverential Regard unto their Judgment.

The Ministers of *Boston*, and some Towns adjacent, than whom there are none more Hearty in the Union of their Brethren at *London*, thought it not enough to have their *Occasional Meetings*, which they have still had, especially alter their *Publick Lectures*. They did therefore *Octob. 13. 1690.* in a more significant manner *Associate* themselves, for the promoting of the *Gospel*, and their mutual Assistance in the Service of it. They Resolved, That they

would Meet the First [or Second] Monday, of every Month [Except the Three Winter Ones,] in the Library of Harvard Collage, at Cambridge. Their Moderator they choole, *pro Tempore*; who Concludes the Convention, wherein he is Chosen, and Begins the next with Prayer. He propounds the Matters to be Debated, and Receives the Suffrages of the Brethren upon the Debates, in their *Ascending Order*. He Reserves the Papers belonging to the Assembly, and Appoints their Assembling upon any Emergencies. They all Subscribe the Rules of their Association, and may not Forsake it, or Neglect it, without giving a sufficient Reason for their doing so. They Advise each other with all Fraternal Charity, in their occurring Difficulties. They upon Hearing, offer what Advice they can to any that may from abroad in their Difficult Circumstances, repair unto them. When they have no Cases brought unto them from others, they ordinarily provide some for Themselves: upon which, Every one having freely declared his mind, it is all summed up, in *Propositions*, which being Voted, are then Entred in their *Memorials*. Behold, the Methods observed by an Association of Ministers, who without Assuming the least Authority unto themselves, over any others in the world, have been willing this way as well to strengthen themselves in the Great Work of Glorifying

Glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, as with the best of their Studies to oblige *All others* that may see cause to make use thereof.

Now, the *Associated Ministers*, finding themselves often called upon, by many abroad in the Countrey, to Answer over again, many *Cases*, which they have already Answered, they permitted *me*, (who am among the *Seventeen*, *Minist'us omnium et Infimus merito*,) to publish out of their *Memorials*, the *CASES*, here Tendered unto the publick. But, if they have consulted their own *Ease*, by this Publication, I easily foresee, that they have also made the more *Work* for themselves, by thus Encouraging more *CASES* to be brought unto them. And yet, rather for the *Good* of others, than their own *Ease*; I am certain, it will exceedingly Rejoyce them, if their Example may provoke the *Ministers* in other parts of the Countrey, no longer to satisfy themselves with *Uncertain Visits* unto each other, but in the most profitable manner their *Discretion* may direct them, to have their *Stated Meetings*, for the Help of each other, in the Affairs of the *Kingdom of God*; and not let any little Differences, or Jealousies, or Self-Conscious Irregularities, or, untreatable Morosities, or any other *Little-nesses* in Conversation, hinder them from so Dwelling together, as to have the precious Oymment on the Head of our Great High Priest,

running down upon them. The *Way to him that is Alone*, certainly may be prevented, by *Stated Meetings* of our *Pastors*, and they may not only be sensible, that they have need enough often to be *Together*, but also spend their Time, *ut qui sciunt Dominum audire*, when they are *Together* : without any danger of overwhelming the *Rights* of *Particular Churches*, by *Classical Combinations*. While our Famous *HOOKER* Lived, the *Meetings* of *Pastors* in their several *Vicinities*, were mentained and cherished in the *Colony of Connecticut*, and managed with no little Advantage to all the *Colony*. And no doubt, more than the *Massachusetts-Province*, may be Edified by the Effects of such *Meetings* therein, though they were no other, than what are Communicated in the *Ensuing* pages.

Cotton Mather.

CASE I.

A QUESTION.

Whether the CHURCH COVENANT used in the Churches of New-England, be of Divine Institution?

I. **I**T is to be Asserted, That there are particular *Congregational Churches* by Christ's Appointment, who are ordinarily to *meet together* for Publick Worship, and mutual Edification.

2. That there is a *distinct Relation* of Membership, which persons bear to that *Individual Society*, which they bear not to other *Christians* and Societies.

3. That there is a power of *Discipline* seated by Christ in every such *Organized Congregation*.

4. That the *Officers* of such a Congregation, are so Officers to *them*, as they are not to *any other*.

5. That the *Relation* between the *Officers* and *Members* of such a Church, must be made by *mutual Consent*.

6. That a person may belong to the *Catholic Visible Church*, and yet not be a Member of a particular Constituted Church.

7. That there must be *something* that Constitutes *this particular Church*, and Denominates a Member of it.

8. That though Christians are bound to joyn with some particular Society, yet they have a liberty to chuse to which, according to the general Gospel Rules.

9. That meer *Cohabitation* doth not make a man a Member of such a Church.

10. That the limitation of *Parochial bounds* is meerly humane, and doth not bind the Conscience of it self.

11. That every man owes a subjection to the *Discipline* of Christ in the Church whereof he is, and is liable to be authoritatively called to an account for his Actions.

12. That every Church ought to be able, *within it self* to uphold Church Discipline, when *Civil Authority* will not support them in it.

13. That every person, coming up to Communion in all Gospel Ordinances, and Privileges, owes a *Profession* of, and *Submission* to the Gospel Covenant.

14. That a profession of subjection to the Government that Christ hath appointed, and under which he puts himself, belongs to, and is a branch of the Gospel Covenant.

15. That

15. That it is a duty for the several Churches on occasion, to *Renew their Covenant*, in obligations to Duties that the times particularly call for.

16. That a Churches thus Combining is the most likely way to promote the power, and purity of Religion.

17. That the *Light of nature* saith, That whenever any company of men enter into a Society for the practising of *common Duties* there must be, and is, either *implicit*, or *explicit consent* between them, by which they oblige themselves: that belongs to every one that enters into such a Society.

The Summ is,

Particular Churches, being an Institution of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it being therefore the duty of Christians to joyn with *particular Churches* for the Worship and Service of their Lord, and to *single out* that *particular Church*, wherein they apprehend their present Edification most attainable, and to maintain Communion with that Church, while the sense of Edification thereto obliges them: all these are *Duties* of the *Covenant of Grace*: and hence it follows, That our Lord Jesus Christ has required Christians, to *acknowledge* these *Duties*, and *profess* their Intention to attend them; which is the very thing done, in the *practice* of our Churches.

Churches. That the particular *Church Covenant* as commonly practised in the Churches of *New England*, is according to Scripture, and not a meer *Humane Invention*, has these further *Evidences*.

I. Nothing is more indisputable, than that under the *Old Testament*, the Church was constituted by a *Covenant*. Nor was any *Profelyte* admitted into that Church, but by *laying hold on that Covenant*. The Scriptures of the *Old Testament* would therefore be directive to us, in the case of the *Church Covenant*, though there were not so full mention of it in the *New*; as they are in the case of the *Church State* of *Infants*, and the *Sanctification of the Lords Day*; which because abundantly insisted on, in the *Old Testament*, are in the *New*, more sparingly mentioned.

II. Nor is it a consideration of no force for our *Church Covenant*, that the Scriptures which relate unto the Church in *Gospel-times*, do carry the plain Intimation of such a *Covenant* in them as is used in our Churches. Thus, *Isa.* 62. 5. 'tis said of the Church, *Thy Sons shall Marry thee*; which implies a *Covenant*. Thus, *Ila.* 44. 5. 'tis said, *One shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel*: which also implies a *Covenant*. Thus, *Ila.* 56. 4, 6. *They choose the things that please me, and take*

take hold of my Covenant. The Sons of the Stranger shall joyn themselves to the Lord, to Serve him.

III. The State of Church Members under the New-Testament, is declared to be that of Fellow Citizens; Eph. 2. 19. Now there is no admittance unto *Jus Civitatis*, or, City priviledges, but by an A& which carries a Covenant in it.

IV. A Particular Church is not Constituted by meer Cohabitation, for then Infidels would be Church Members; nor by meer Profession, for then it would be impossible to Cut off scandalous Church Members by Excommunication: Nor by meer Baptism, for then upon the Ceasing of Membership in a particular Church, a man must be Re baptized.

V. If an Implicit Covenant, be absolutely necessary to the Being of a Particular Church, then Explicit Covenanting, is but agreeable to the Law of Christ. But the former is true: where men do not Implicitly consent, to worship the Lord Jesus Christ together, according to his Institutions, they neither are, nor can be a Church: Certainly for them to Engage Explicitly to do so, is a thing unexceptionable.

VI. And that the practice of our Churches in this matter, is no New Practice, we have plentiful Testimonies. The practice of the Primitive Churches, to have a Sacred Covenant among them, is Testified by Justin Martyr, by Tertullian,

Tertullian, and by *Plinius* Letter to *Trajan*. Since the *Reformation* also, we find in several of the first *Reforming Churches*, the practice of such a *Sacred Covenant*.

Momorandum. The Ministers of the Province, in a General Convention, at *Boston*, May 26. 1698. Signified their Concurrence to these Assertions and Arguments, with a General Unanimity.

Increase Maiber, Moderator.

The Following Cases, were by a more particular Assembly of Ministers, at several Times meeting in the Colledge at *Cambridge*, thus determined.

CASE II.

A QUESTION.

Whether to Drink HEALTHS, be an usage Lawful for a Christian?

IT is too notorious to be denied, that it was originally an *Heathen Custom*, to Drink those which were called, the *Cups of Health*, in token of Respect unto the objects mentioned in their Cups. The great *Austin* truly says, *De Paganorum observatione remansit*; it is a Relique of *Paganism*. And, inasmuch as it is not a natural

tural Action, but an action of a *Religious Nature*, and as themselves call it, a *Devotion*, it is now reached by those Oracles of God, which forbid our *Learning the ways, & the works of the Heathen*; & our *Walking as the Gentiles, in the vanity of their mind*; and our *Keeping the vain Conversation received by Tradition from our Fathers*.

II. That which very much adds to the Obligations lying upon Christians, to abandon this *Relique of Paganism*, is the *Idolatrous*, and the *Diabolical Intention*, that gave the first Rise unto it. We are assured, from all the monuments of Antiquity, that the *Healts* drunk by the *Pagans* were first of all *Drink Offerings* to their *Dæmons*; they were a *Cup of Devil*; and then sufficiently to complement their *Princes and Patrons*, they carryed on the *Offerings*, to these mortals also; and lastly the complement proceeded so far, as to take in any *Friends*, whom they saw cause to treat with such flourishes of affection. It becomes Christians to beware of having any *fellowship* with such *unfruitful works of Darkness*.

III. To Drink a *Cup*, as a *Part* or *Sign*, of our Invocation upon the blessed God, for the *Healtb* of any person, is a *Superstition*, directly forbidden by the *Second Commandment*: Nor is it ordinarily free from a violation of the *Third*: and that the Drinking of an *Healtb*, is thus designed, and so becomes no other than a *Profane*

same Sacrament, was the judgment of *Ambrose*; when he wrote those words; *Quid memorem Sacramenta? Bibamus pro salute Imperatorum.* To Drink an *Health* implies an application to some object for that *Health*: This way of it is unwarrantable.

IV. To Begin, or Follow, *Healts* which bind persons to *Drink* off their Cups, is a manifold offence against *Charity*, *Justice*, and *Reason*. Such *Healts* being, as the Ancients truly called them, *The Devils shooing Horns to draw on Drunkenness*; are *Scandals* wherein much *Bruitish folly* is *Committed*, and more *Occasioned*. The *Primitive Christians* therefore justly *Rebuked* them, and *Condemned* them. Great *Emperours* have made *Edicts* against them; *Pagan writers* have *Satyrically* lashed them; and even *Popish Writers* have *Reproached* the *Protestant Profession*, for their being so much practiced under it.

V. Not only the *Numberless* and *Prodigious Exorbitances* of *Health Drinking*, are to be avoided by every *Christian*, but the very proposing our *Cups* to the *Prosperity* of what is therein *Remembred*. 'Tis a vain plea, that we drink no more then the *Civil Remembrance* of the persons or affairs mentioned in our *Cups*. Why is the action of *Drinking* singled out, rather than any other, for the token of the *Remembrance*? and why is there such a stress laid upon a *Concurrence* in

in the action? It is but a continuation of the *Old Paganism*, which had better be utterly *Abolish'd*, than thus *Refined* and *Preserved*. Every thing that serves either to *Revive*, or to *Maintain* the old *Pagan Follies*, and harden men in them, should be declined by them, that would *Adorn* the *Doctrine of God our Saviour*.

C A S E III.

A QUESTION.

Whether INSTRUMENTAL MUSICK, may be used by the Churches of Christ, in His Publick Worship and Service?

THE *Instrumental Musick* used in the old Church of Israel, was an *Institution* of God; It was [2 Chron. 29. 25.] *The Commandment of the Lord by his Prophets*. And the *Instruments* are called *Gods Instruments*; [1 Chro. 16. 42.] And *Instruments of the Lord*: [2 Chron. 7. 6.] Now there is not *one word* of *Institution* in the *New Testament*, for *Instrumental Musick* in the *worship of God*. And because the *Holy God*, *Rejects* what he does not *Command*, in his *Worship*, he now therefore in *Effect* says unto us, *I will not bear the melody of thy Organs*. But on the other side, the *Rule* given, does abundantly *Intimate*, that *no voice* is now to be heard in the

the Church, but what is *Significant*, and *Edifying* by *Signification*; which the voice of *Instruments* is not.

II. Though *Instrumental Musick* were admitted and appointed, in the Worship of God, under the *Old Testament*, yet we do not find it *Practiced*, in the *Synagogues* of the *Jews*, but only in the *Temple*. It thence appears, to have been a part of the *Ceremonial Pædagoꝑy*, which is now abolished. Nor can any say, it was a part of *moral worship*. And whereas the *Common usage* now hath confined *Instrumental Musick* to *Cathedrals*, it seems there in too much to *Judaize*; which to do, is a part of the *Antichristian Apostacy*, as well as to *Paganize*.

III. In our asserting, a matter of the *Old Testament* to have been *Typical*, 'tis not needful that we be alwayes able to particularize any *Future Mysteries* of the *New Testament* therein referr'd unto; *Truths* which were then of a *present Consideration*, were sometimes represented in the *Types* then used among the *People of God*. Which helps to understand the case of *Instrumental Musick*.

IV. *Instrumental Musick* in the Worship of God, is but a very late *Invention* and *Corruption*, in the Church of the *New Testament*. The writings that go under the name of *Justin Martyr*, deny it, and decry it: *Cbrysoftom* speaks meanly of it; even *Aquinas* himself about
four

four hundred years ago determines against it, as Jewish and Carnal. *Bellarmino* himself confesses, that it was but late received in the Church.

V If we admit *Instrumental Musick* in the Worship of God, how can we resist the *Imposition* of all the *Instruments* used among the *Ancient Jews*; yea, *Dancing* as well as *Playing*, and several other *Judaic actions*? Or, how can we decline a whole rabble of *Church Officers*, necessary to be introduced, for *Instrumental Musick*, whereof our Lord Jesus Christ hath left us no manner of *Direction*?

CASE IV.

PROPOSITIONS,

About the Office of Ruling Elders.

I. **T**Hough the *Pastors* of Churches, are originally Entrusted with the *whole* care of what is to be done, in the *feeding* and *ruling* of the Societies, whereof the Holy Spirit has made them *Overseers*; yet the Wisdom and Goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ has made provision for their *Assistance*, in the management of those Church-Affairs, which would otherwise too much Encumber them, in devoting themselves to the *Word* and *Prayer*.

B

2. *Ruling*

2. *Ruling Elders*, are appointed for the Assistance of their *Pastors*, in the Government of their Churches, and the Inspection of the Flocks; and although these Officers may not be furnished with all those Attainments which are necessary to a Pastor, yet if they are so accomplished, as that they may be Helps to their Pastor, in the management of Church Rule, they may be Chosen thereunto, with much Benefit and Advantage to the people of God.

3. Whereas 'tis the business of a *Ruling Elder* to assist his Pastor in Visiting of the Distressed, Instructing of the Ignorant, Reducing of the Erroneous, Comforting of the Afflicted, Advising of the Defective, Rebuking of the Unruly, Discovering the State of the whole Flock, Exercising the Discipline of the Gospel upon Offenders, and promoting the desirable growth of the Church, 'tis necessary that he be a person of a Wisdom, Courage, Leisure, and Exemplary Holiness and Gravity, agreeable to such Employments.

CASE V.

A QUESTION.

Whether the Pastor of a Neighbouring Church, may not upon the Request of a Destitute Church, Administer the Sacraments unto them?

INasmuch as the Pastors of any Evangelical Churches are, though not having a Pastoral Charge

Charge of more than one, to be acknowledged in all of them, as *Ordained Ministers* of the Lord Jesus Christ, and are actually acknowledged as Preaching in that Capacity, when they are occasionally put upon Preaching of the Gospel abroad ;

Inasmuch also as the *Communion of Churches*, which makes the Members of any, capable of Admission to the *Special Ordinances* of the Lord Jesus Christ in all of them, does likewise render it reasonable, for the *Pastors* of any to be capable of Administring those Ordinances in all :

It is therefore our Judgment, that the *Pastor* of a *Neighbouring Church*, may upon the Request of a *Destitute Church*, occasionally Administer the Sacraments unto them.

And it is our further Judgment, that the second Article in the fifteenth Chapter of our *Platform of Church Discipline*, is to be understood as approving of it.

Nor is it unknown, that *Eminent Congregational Churches*, have by their practice manifested themselves to have been of this Judgment before us.

And it seems in the purest and earliest of the *Primitive Times*, to have been allow'd.

Nevertheless, we think it convenient, that as the *Destitute Churches* do by their *Vote*, call the *Neighbour Pastors* to that *Ocasional Service*, be-

fore they attend it, so that the *consent* of the Churches, whereto those Pastors belong, be not left Unconsider'd in it.

We do moreover think, that nothing should be done in this matter that may in any wise *Obstruct* the welfare of any *bereaved Churches*, in their speedy seeking of a *Settled Supply*, for all Ordinances among them, or otherwise Interrupt and Incommode *Common Edification*.

CASE VI.

PROPOSITIONS,

About the Power of SYNODS, with respect unto Particular Churches,

I. **P**articular Churches, having the same original, ends & interests, and being mutually concerned in the good and evil of each other, there is the *light of Nature*, as well as of *Scripture*, to direct the meeting of Churches by their *Delegates*, to consult and conclude things of *common concernment* unto them.

II. Synods duely composed, of *Messengers* chosen by them, whom they are to represent, & proceeding with a due regard unto the *Will* of God in his *Word*, are to be revered, as *Determining* the mind of the Holy Spirit, concerning things necessary to be Received or Practised,
in

in order to the *Edification* of the Churches there in represented.

III. All the Commands of God, which bid us to be *Well-advised*, and to regard a *Multitude of Counsellors*, do particularly oblige us, with reverence to entertain the advice of *Synods*, assembling in the Name and Fear of the Lord Jesus Christ, for an enquiry after his directions; and if *One Church* be to be *heard*, much more are *Many Churches* to be so, in things that properly fall under the cognizance thereof.

IV. *Synods* being by *Apostolical Example* recommended as a *necessary Ordinance*, it is but reasonable that their *Judgment* be acknowledged as *Decisive* in the affairs for which they are *Ordained*, and to deny them the power of such a *Judgment*, is to render a *necessary Ordinance* of none effect.

V. The power of *Synods*, is not to *abate*, much less to *destroy* the Liberties of *Particular Churches*, but to *Strengthen* and *Direct* those Churches in the right use of the powers given by the Lord Jesus Christ unto them. And such Assemblies are therefore to be used as a *relief* ordained by God, for those *Difficulties*, for which the care and state of a *Particular Church*, affords not a sufficient remedy.

VI. The rights allowed unto *Synods*, in the *Irenicum* of the Excellent *Jeremiah Burroughs*, Chap. 7. we fully consent and subscribe unto.

CASE VII.

A QUESTION.

Whether it be Lawful for a man to Marry his Wifes own Sister?

1. **A** Marriage between a man and his Wifes own Sister, is positively prohibited in that Law of God. *Levit. 18. 16. That a man may not Marry his Brothers Wife.* By the plainest consequences, a woman may not Marry her Sisters Husband: The degree prohibited is exactly the same.

2. The Law which thus prohibited the Marriage of a man to his Wifes own Sister, has an Authority, and an obligation reaching even to the Gentiles, upon whom the Ends of the World are come. 'Tis evident, in that the Violation of this Law, is declared, one of those Abominations, for which the Ancient Canaanites were Spued out of their Land. And we find the New Testament in diverse places insisting upon those prohibitions, among which this Law is one. The good Order which God has by this Law established in Humane Society, is that which the Light of Nature in man-kind, as now increased, abundantly testifies unto. The Dispensation which the Sovereign Law-giver once gave, in one instance, hereunto,

hereunto, was Extraordinary. The Example of *Jacob* in this matter, is to be disapproved by all that would be esteemed *his Children*, as well as that of his *Polygamy*. And such Matches are in *History*, branded, as attended with a remarkable *Curse* of God upon them.

3. 'Tis the Law of our God, in *Levit. 18. 6.* *None of you shall approach (in a Marriage) unto any that is near of kin to him.* Now the kindred between a man and his *Wifes own Sister*, is of the nearest sort : for, *Inter virum et mulierem, non contrahitur affinitas, sed ipsi sunt affinitatis causa* : So then, this *Affinity*, is not less than, in *primo genere*, and therefore Unlawful.

It is likewise the concurrent sense of the greatest Divines (particularly asserted in the *Assemblies confession of Faith*) that in what degree any one is of consanguinity to the *Wife*, in the same degree of *Affinity* is that person to the *Husband*, And, that an *Husband* is forbidden to Marry with the consanguines of his *Wife*, by the same rules that consanguines are forbidden to Marry among themselves ; And this assertion may be demonstrated from the rules given in the Eighteenth Chapter of *Leviticus*. Wherefore as a man may not Marry his own *Sister*, so not the *Sister* of his *Wife*, which is one flesh with him.

4. The *Marriage* in the question, has been so Scandalous among the whole people of God, that whosoever is guilty of it, is therein worthy

to be cut off from the communion of the Catholick Church. Yea, it has been one of the Imperial Laws, *Duabus sororibus conjungendi penitus licentiam submovemus.*

Much less may such an Iniquity be countenanced among a people of our profession.

CASE VIII.

A QUESTION.

Whether, and, How far the Discipline of our Lord in our Churches, is to be Extended unto the Children therein Baptised?

1 **WE** Judge, that the Discipline of our Lord Jesus Christ in our Churches ought to be extended unto the Children baptised in them: Inasmuch as these persons are certainly those which the Scripture calls *Within*, and not *Without*; And the *Lambs* as well as others, in the Flocks of our Lord, are to be fed: And the practice of the purest Churches has been agreeable to this principle; as well the *Primitive* before, as the *Bohemian* and others, since the *Reformation*; Reason also says, that where a privilege is expected, a Discipline is to be acknowledged.

2. Although it is a *Membership* in the Catholick Church, which gives right unto Baptism, yet
Particular

Particular Churches, as well as the *Pastors* of those Churches, owe a duty to the *Catholic Church*; part of which duty is, the Application of *Discipline* unto those *Baptised* persons, whom the Providence of God shall cast under their Inspection.

3. The *Discipline*, which we count owing unto these persons is, An *Instruction* in the Laws of our Lord Jesus Christ; an *Admonition* upon a scandalous violation of those Laws; and upon *Incorrigibleness* in evil, an open rejection from all *Ecclasiastical Priviledges*. And although persons are then most clearly liable to this process, when they have actually *Renewed* their *Baptismal Covenant*, and Recognized their subjection to the *Government* of our Lord in his Church; and the *Children* of the Church are to be accordingly laboured withal, that they may be brought he reunto; yet we do not think, that any of the said persons refusing or neglecting thus to do, are thereby exempted from all such care of the Church to bring them unto *Repentance*.

CASE IX.

PROPOSITIONS;

*About the Obligation upon Ministers to VISIT
the SICK, in times of Epidemical and
Contagious Distempers.*

1. **M**inisters of the Gospel are to have a great concern for the *Sick* under their Pastoral

Pastoral Charge, and endeavour the fulfilling of their Ministry, not only by fitting the necessities of their Sick with their Prayers, but also by leaving them unacquainted with none of those Counsels which may prepare them for their End.

2. Nevertheless in times of Epidemical Contagions, the Ministers of the Gospel may by various methods, attend what is necessary thus to be attended, without the ordinary visitations of the Infected Chambers.

3. A Minister solicitous about his duty in Visiting the Sick of his Flock, when Pestilential Contagions are prevailing, may receive much direction from the Courage wherewith he may find the God of Heaven fortifying his heart unto such an undertaking.

4. The bare desires of the Sick, to be visited by a Minister, have often so much of evident unseasonableness and unreasonableness, and perhaps of worse causes in them, that 'tis no ways fitting a life should be sacrificed merely thereunto.

5. When a Minister is well assured, that the Sick of his own Flock are labouring under such Loads upon their Consciences, as can't fitly be Unburden'd unto any but himself, he has a call from Heaven to venture himself unto the utmost for the Service of such a Soul, and may expect the protection of heaven accordingly to be a shield unto him.

6. A Minister in times of *General Mortalities*, may do well before he expose himself unto the evident hazards of those *Mortalities*, to take the *Advice* and *Consent* of that Church unto whose Edification the labours of his life are dedicated, whether they are willing that he should sacrifice his life unto the *private Service* of the *Sick*; and the opinion of a people thus asked, will afford much *satisfaction* unto a Minister as to what may be in this case incumbent on him.

7. In times extraordinarily pestilential, if the *Neighbouring Ministers* do by lot, solemnly single out one of their number, to devote himself, with the exemption of the rest, unto the help of the *Sick*, 'twere a course not to be disapproved; but a Minister so devoted, may cheerfully commend himself to the acceptance of God, in serving of the distressed.

CASE X.

A QUESTION.

In what cases a Minister may leave his people?

1. **A** Pastor Settled in the Service of a People, is to be so sensible of his designation by the Spirit and Providence of the Lord Jesus Christ for that Service, and of the account that he

he must give unto God, about his behaviour in it, that his *removal* must not be *rashly* attempted, but with much *consideration*, *consultation*, *supplication*, and sincere *desire* to follow the *conduct* of *Heaven* in it. The frowns of God use to follow *Removes*, that have not so been regulated.

2. That the will of our Lord, about the *Removal* of any *Pastor*, from his *people*, may be understood, it is requisite, that the *Minister* do not entirely *assume* to himself, the *Judgment* of his own call to remove: but a great regard must be had unto the *Direction* of the *Church* of the Lord, in the *Neighbourhood*.

3. They unto whom the *Judgment* of a *Pastors Removal* from his *people* is to be reserved, should exactly weigh both the *present* and future circumstances of *both*; and endeavour a *provision*, that neither party may suffer, in the *Removal* of the *Minister* from his *Flock*.

4. In case there be arisen those *incureable prejudices*, *dissentions*, *animosities*, and *implacable offences*, between a *Pastor* and his *People*, that all *reverence* for and *benefit* by his *Ministry*, is utterly to be despaired, he may be *Removed*. The *want of success* otherwise, is not a sufficient cause of *Removal*; but it is to be endured with all *humble patience* by the *Minister*, as a great *affliction*, and yet with this encouragement, that God will reward him, *Secundum Laborem, non secundum proventum*.

5. A Pastor may be removed from his people, in case his Translation be found necessary for the common good. The welfare of the Catholick Church in the general Edification of a Community, should be of such weight, as to make any particular Church give way thereunto. But yet it becomes not any Minister to seek his own Translation, by first offering himself unto it.

6. There are some things, which dissolve the Vinculum Pastorale, between a Pastor and his People, and in case those distasters happen, he may be removed. Thus if a Minister have Tolerable subsistence, wherewith he may after a Christian manner provide for his own, Deny'd unto him: Or, if a Minister have no way to avoid a storm of Persecution, purely personal, but by flying from one City to another; a remove may be justified. And the Dissolution of a Church gives a like liberty to him that had been the Shepherd of the now scattered Flock.

7. Although a Pastor should be willing to Encounter many Difficulties and Infirmities with his people; yet in case that Chronical Diseases, which evidently threaten his life, might hopefully be relieved, by his removal, it should then on all hands be allowed and advised. Mercy is here to be preferred unto Sacrifice; and so we find it was in the Primitive Churches accordingly.

8. If much of *Scandal* will certainly ensue upon the *Removal* of a *Pastor* from his *People*, That should weigh down many circumstances, that would rather invite such a *Removal*.

CASE XL

A QUESTION.

What Singular Expedients should we further Meditate and Prosecute, for promoting of the great Design of REFORMATION among us?

1. **T**HERE is a large number of people in this Country, which not lying within the reach of our *Ecclesiastical Discipline*, do from thence encourage themselves, in the *Liberty* which they take, to do the things for which the wrath of God comes upon the Land. It would very much promote the designs of *Reformation* among us, if all due means were used, for the bringing of more than there are, and as many as may be, to submit unto our *Church Watch*: 'twere highly desirable and necessary that the body of this professing people should thus be brought into the way of *Reformation*. It hath been by an happy experience found, that God hath given a singular Success unto the *Admonitions* of our Churches, apply'd unto such as have by their *Miscarriages* thereto exposed themselves; many

many have been thereby savingly brought home unto God.

2. The Expedients for the *Reformation* of our Land, offered by the *Synod*, in the year 1679. ought not to be forgotten, but the Remembrance and the consideration thereof should be revived.

3. The *Concurrence* of such as do sustain place in the *Civil Government* is of great Importance, in the prosecution of our desired *Reformation*: and that we may enjoy this, it must be endeavoured, that there should be no *misunderstandings* between any in the *Government*, and in the *Ministry*. This being observed, a *General Consultation*, upon the *Methods of Reformation*, is to be asked for.

4. For the *Pastors* of our Churches, in *Visiting* of their Flocks, to inform themselves about the *Morals* of their people in every quarter, and thereupon both publicly and privately set themselves to *Cure* what shall be found amiss, would signifie very much in a glorious *Reformation*.

5. *Particular Churches*, have a power of *Self-Reformation*, and they would contribute more than a little, to an *Universal* one, if they would be *Exemplary* unto one another, in deliberations upon their own circumstances, and in *Renewing, Explaining and Enforcing* of their *Covenant*.

6. It would be well, if the *Ministers* in this
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(as well as any other) *Association* would single out the more *Observable Iniquities* in the Country, and successively at fit seasons, publish brief, but full *Testimonies* against those Iniquities. A manifold advantage might accrue to our Attempts of *Reformation*, by those *Testimonies*.

7. *Solemn Dayes of Prayer with Fasting*, celebrated in our Churches, to Implore the *Grace* of God, for the *Rising Generation*, would probably be of blessed Consequence for the turning of our Young People, unto the God of our Fathers. The more there is this way ascribed unto *Grace*, the more is the *Grace* of God like to be communicated ; and there is in this way a Natural and Plentiful Tendency to awaken our Unconverted Youth, unto a sense of their Everlasting Interests : which were it generally accomplished, a *Remarkable Reformation* were therein effected.

CASE XII.

QUESTION.

In what Cases, is a DIVORCE of the Married, justly to be Pursued and Obtained ?

1. **T**O judge, determine and accomplish, a Divorce of any Married persons, the Civil Magistrate is to be addressed or concerned.

2. In

2. In case any married persons be found under natural *Incapacities* and *Insufficiencies* which utterly disappoint the *Confessed Ends of Marriage*, the *Marriage* is to be declared a *Nullity*.

3. In case any married person be found already bound in a *Marriage* to another yet Living, a *Divorce* is to be granted unto the aggrieved party.

4. In case any married person be convicted of such criminal *Uncleanesses* as render them *one flesh* with another Object, than that whereto their *Marriage* has united them, the Injured Party may sue and have their *Divorce* from the Offending: which is the plain sense of Sentence passed *Mat. 19. 9.* by our Lord.

5. In case there be found *Incest* in a *Marriage*, a *Divorce* is to command the *Separation* of the Married.

6. In case it be found that the person Married, had by *Fornication* before *Marriage*, been made one with a person related unto the person with whom they are now Married, within the degrees made *Intestuous*, by the Law of God, it is a just plea for a *Divorce*.

7. In case of a *Malicious Desertion* by a married person, which is Obligated and Invited to return, a *Divorce* may be granted by *Lawful Authority*, unto the forsaken. For the Word of God is plain, *That a Christian is not bound in such cases, by the Marriage Covenant, unto one*
 which

which thus wilfully violates the Covenant; and though our Saviour forbids, *a mans putting away his Wife, except it be for Fornication*, yet he forbids not Rulers to rescue an *Innocent person* from the Enthralling Disadvantages of another that shall sinfully go away.

8. As for married persons long absent from each other, and not heard of by each other, the Government may State what *length of Time* in this case, may give such a presumption of *Death* in the person abroad, as may render a *Second Marriage* free from *Scandal*.

9. A *Divorce* being legally pursued and obtained, the Innocent person that is released, may proceed unto a *Second Marriage in the Lord*: otherwise the State of Believers under the New-Testament, would in some of these cases, be worse then what the God of Heaven, directed for his people under the Old.

C A S E XIII.

P R O P O S I T I O N S,

Concerning the Power of ELDERS, in the Government of the Church.

1. **T**He power of Church Government belongs only to the *Elders* of the Church. The names of *Elders* in the Scriptures are but Insignificant

nificant and Unintelligible *Metaphors*, if the *Rule* of the Church be not only in the hands of its *Elders*.

The *Word* of God hath ordered the *People* to Obey the *Elders* of the Church, as having the rule over them, and a watch over their *Souls*.

An Ability to *Rule well* is a qualification particularly required in the *Elders* of the Church, that they may be able to take a due care of it.

Governments are Enumerated among those things in the Church, which *All* are not; but which are compatible unto *some* only: now, who but the *Elders*?

Were the *Government* of the Church as much in the *Brethren* as in the *Elders*, then the *whole Body* were all eye; which it is not.

2. There are yet certain cases, wherein the *Elders* in the Management of their Church *Government*, are to take the concurrence of the *Fraternity*. 'Tis to be done in those *Acts*, to attain the *Ends* whereof, there are to follow certain *Duties* of the *Fraternity*: namely, *Elections*, and *Admissions*, and *Censures*.

Hence in such things we find the *Injunctions* of the *Scripture* address'd unto the *whole Church*. Hence all *Antiquity* assures us, that such matters were in the *Primitive Church* done still, *Consentiente Plebe*.

And the *Brethren* of the Church might o-
therwise

therwise be obliged unto the doing of things, wherein they cannot act *in faith*, or be conscientiously satisfied that such things are to be done.

3. Nevertheless the *Pastor* of a Church may by himself *authoritatively suspend* from the *Lords Table*, a Brother accused or suspected of *Scandal*, till the matter may and should be regularly Examined.

Our Lord forbids the coming of such an Offendor to his *Altar*, it even one of *less*, of *no* authority in the Church, do signifie a reasonable dissatisfaction.

The *Pastors* of the Church, are the *Porters* of the Temple, Impowred sufficiently to detain such as they see with *moral Uncleanesses* upon them.

And it belonging unto the *Pastors* of the Church, to direct the *Brethren* upon the first opportunity, in the Application of the necessary *Discipline*, it is not reasonable, that they should be bound in the mean time, to *declare practically* what shall be contrary to such *direction*, by Administring the *Lords Supper* unto a person against whom the *Discipline* is to be urged.

4. But the *Elders* of the Church have a *Negative* on the Votes of the *Brethren*: Who indeed in the exercise of their *Liberty* and *Privilege*, are under the conduct of the *Elders*.

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To take away the *Negative* of the *Elders*, or the Necessity of their consent unto *Church-acts*, indeed is to take away all *Government* whatsoever: and it is to turn the whole Regiment of the Church into a meer *Democracy*.

And if the *Positive* of the Brethren can supersede a *Negative* of the *Elders*, either the *Elders* may be driven to do things quite contrary to the light of their Conscience, or else the *Brethren* may presume to do things which belong not unto them.

CASE XIV.

PROPOSITIONS,

Concerning ORDINATION.

I **A** *Solemn Separation* to the Service of our Lord Jesus Christ in his Church is Essential to the call of a *Church Officer*.

2. The *Election* of the Church, and a compliance with, and acceptance of that *Election*, by a person coming under such a *Separation*, is that wherein lies the *Essence* of his call to Minister unto that particular Church.

3. The *Imposition of hands*, in the Ordination of a *Church Officer*, is a Rite not only *Lawful* to be retained, but it seems by a *Divine Institution* directed and required; so that although the

Call of a person to *Church-Office* may not become null and void, where that *Rite* may have been omitted, as it is to the *Seniors* and *Deacons* in most of the *Reformed Churches*; yet we cannot approve the Omission of it: *A Ceremonial Defect* may be blame-worthy.

4. When it is Enjoyned, *Lay hands suddenly on no man*; there seems a plain positive in that *Negative*, and it is implied, *that hands are to be laid on some*. Now when or where, but in *Ordination*?

5. The whole *Ordination* to a Ministry seems intended in the Apostles expression of, *a gift given with the laying on of hands*; yea, nothing less than the whole Ministry under that *Ordination*, seems comprized in the Apostles expression of, *The Doctrine of Laying on of Hands*. And such a *Synecdoche* intimates that this *Rite* is no inconsiderable part of that, whereof 'tis put for the whole.

6. The Church of God in all Ages has used an *Imposition of hands*, as a *Rite* many ways agreeable to the Will of God; and besides the use of this *Rite* sometimes on *Miraculous Accounts*, there has been still a more constant use of it on *Ecclesiastical Accounts*; not conferring, but confessing of *Qualifications*, in the Subjects that received it. Which one Reason hath in it many and weighty considerations.

7. The

7. The *Imposition of Hands*, being a *Rite* used by the *Primitive Church*, even in the *Confirming* and *Restoring* of *Church Members*, and this not altogether without the countenance of *Scripture*, it seems very much to take away pretence for laying it aside, in the *Ordination* of *Church-Officers*.

8. 'Tis well known, that the *Jews* even in their *Schools*, and almost every *Special work* for *God*, whereto men were set apart, used *Imposition of Hands*, as a *Rite* accompanying such a *Dedication*.

9. The *Imposition of Hands* having been a *Rite*, which the people of *God* under the old *Testament*, in his Name, applyed unto such purposes as, a *Benediction* of a person, a *Designation* to a function, an *Oblation* of what was to be presented unto *God*, and a *Devolution* of certain burdens on the heads of such as were treated with it: The *Lord* has continued this *Rite* in the *Ordaining* of *Church Officers*, with some eye to such intents and purposes.

10. Most unexceptionable is the *Imposition of Hands* by a *Presbytery*, in *Ordination*, but more exceptionable by a *Fraternity*. The word of *God* mentions the former expressly; but not the latter, in the *New-Testament*. They were such *Hands* as *Titus's*, that were left to *Ordain Elders*; what need of that, if the *Hands* of common believers were sufficient? They were such

Hands as *Timothy's*, that were to make over Church betrustments, unto faithful men, able to teach others : who fitter to signify the needed approbation of other Churches ? And inasmuch as in *Ordination*, there is an acknowledgement of Admission into an Order, 'tis but reasonable, that some who are in some Order of Church-Power should give it.

CASE XV.

PROPOSITIONS,

Touching the Power of CHOOSING a Pastor.

I. **A** Society of Believers, combined for the Worship of the Lord Jesus Christ in all his Ordinances, have the right of *Choosing* the Pastor, that is to Administer unto them these Ordinances.

The Scriptures do still call for the *Suffrages* of the Brethren in the Churches for all Elections in those Churches, and particularly, that of Elders.

In the oldest and the purest of its times, we still find the Brethren of the Church, possessed of a power to choose for it self, and the destruction of that power, was among none of the earliest Encroachments of Antichrist.

The *Jus Patronatus* in some Churches pretended

tended unto, is an usurpation upon the Flock of God, justly to be exploded.

The pretences of the *Civil Magistrate* unto the like disposal for the same causes, were for many ages no less justly than sharply deny'd.

II. A *Particular Church* owing a great regard unto the *Church Catholick* in the using of its *own right*, is bound in Duty, to consult the Satisfaction and Edification of others, in their Election of a *Pastor*.

Ministers and *Messengers* of Neighbouring Churches, have pow'r to except against any Election of a *Pastor*, who by *Errors* or *Scandals* may be rendred unfit for the common Service of the Gospel.

Churches in the Election of a *Pastor* are to consider the benefit of all that are to be his *Hearers*; and more particu'arly, the concurrence of such as are by the *Covenant* and *Appointment* of God, under the *Church Watch* among them.

III. The respect that Churches do show unto others, in the Election of a *Pastor*, ought so to be managed, as that they do not permit their own *just Priviledges* to be extinguished, by any *Anticipating Impositions* upon them.

Churches may suffer their *Elections* to be *Directed*, yea, and be *Diverted* by considerations, which they owe to others in the *Vicinity*, without surrendring their *Liberties* to be *Smothered* by any that would unjustly Impose thereupon.

CASE

CASE XVI.

A QUESTION.

Whether there be any Cases, wherein a Minister of the Gospel, may lay down his Ministry ?

I. **N**O man can rightly, wisely, or safely, become a *Minister of the Gospel*, without a *Call of God*, which call is *mediate* and manifested by *Ministerial Gifts*, with some *Inclination* and *Opportunity* to exercise those gifts.

II. When a Minister of the Gospel does by the compelling Providence of God become *Deprived* of those *Essential things* whereby his *Call* was discovered, without any rational prospect of *Recovering* them, he may then lay down his *Ministry*.

III. But before one called unto the *Ministry*, do relinquish it, there should be such a *Concurrence* of *Incapacities*, that a persons own *Arbitrary Inclinations* acted by *Temptations* may not be the thing that shall dismiss him. One consecrated unto the *Ministry* is thus *Pro termino vitae*; nor may a man setting his hand unto this *Plough*, at his own pleasure *Look back*.

IV. For one in the *Sacred Ministry* to leave it for the sake of *Riches* or *Honours* more likely to be acquired in another way of living, or for the

the sake of *Discouragement* arising from *Unsuccessfulness*, or *Persecution*, or other difficulties, is no ways allowable.

V. A person disabled by the *Infirmities* of Old Age or *Weakness*, for the labour of the Ministry, still retaining his Office, is to be still consider'd in the dutiful regards of the Church as their Pastor notwithstanding.

VI. A *Censure*, though an unjust one, of a *Civil Magistrate*, silencing of a *Particular Minister*, may in some cases be a sufficient Reason for his forbearing to do his word for *Some time*, or at *This Place*, though it release him not from the obligations of his *Holy Calling*.

VII. The *Disasters* which have been observed, as frequently following those who have deserted their *Spiritual Warfare*, without the leave of the Lord, are just Admonitions unto all Ministers of our Lord, against any *undue Desertion* of the Service wherein they have been listed.

C A S E X V I I .

A Q U E S T I O N .

Whether the Pastor of a Church, upon a Common Fame of a Scandal committed by any in his Church, be bound in duty, to Enquire into that Scandal, although there should not be brought any Formal Complaint unto him of it ?

I. According

1. **A**ccording to the Apostolical direction, an Enquiry into an offence was ordered upon this consideration. 1 Cor. 5. 1. *It is reported Commonly.*

2. The Elders of Israel, were to make enquiry into an Offence after this manner. *Deut. 19. 12, 14. If thou shalt hear say, ... Then shalt thou enquire and make search and ask diligently.*

3. The Commendation of a Civil Ruler does by proportion and parity of Reason, belong to an Ecclesiastical one. *Job 29. 16. The cause which I knew not, I searched out.*

4. The same that may move others to complain of a Scandal unto the Pastor should move the Pastor to enquire after a Reported Scandal, namely, the Glory of the Lord, the Defence of the Church, and the Welfare of the Erring Person, every one of which will suffer, if such enquiry be not made.

5. The Neighbours may be so far under the power of Temptation, as to forbear making Orderly Delations of Scandals committed; and it is therefore necessary, that such things fall under the enquiry of the Pastor, thereto by Common Fame alarmed.

6. The Pastor of a Church is by Office to Watch over the Conversation of the people; and a noise of a Scandal arisen in the Conversation of those under his Watch, is a sufficient provocation for his enquiry after it.

7. Finally,

7. Finally, a *Rumour* of a Scandal in a Church-member is that wherein the *Name* of the Lord Jesus Christ is concerned; and for the Vindication of that *Worthy Name*, an enquiry being made into it, there may appear such powerful *Presumptions*, while there are not yet sufficient *Convictions*, of *Guilt* in the party concerned, that the person shall be bound (except in a *Capital case*) either to give a *Positive denial*, or to make a *Penitent confession*, of the matter *Commonly famed* of him.

C A S E XVIII.

A Q U E S T I O N.

How far the CONFESSIONS of a Guilty and a Troubled Conscience, are to be kept Secret, by the Minister, or Christian, to whom those Confessions have been made?

1. **T**IS very certain, that Ordinarily the *Confessions* of a guilty and a troubled *Conscience* are to be kept *Secret* by those to whom they are made. The *Ends* for which the Lord Jesus Christ has directed such *Confessions*, would be all frustrated, if they should not be most Religiously concealed; and they are made, as unto the Lord.

2. Nevertheless, when any *Evident Mischief* will

will arise, general or personal, either in point of *Safety* or of *Justice*, by the concealment of a *Secret Confession* : It is no longer to be kept secret.

In such Cases, the confessing person himself can have no ease in his own *Conscience* (which is the design of *Confession*) without publishing his own crime ; and therefore here can be no obligation upon any other to assist him in Covering of it.

3. When the *Endanger'd Safety and Interest of others* make it necessary for the confession of a *Secret Sin* to be exposed ; it is fit for the person who has heard this Confession to advise the person himself that within a *Time* limited and convenient, he do himself make it known unto the persons concern'd ; which if he fail to do, then is the time for the first bearer of the Confession to do his duty.

4. In the great *Capitals*, if there be other ways a Divulcation thereof ; he that hath had the Confession of such a *Secret Sin*, may come in as a *second witness*, to reveal the secret, for the conviction of the *Malefactor* under judicial process.

5. Where the Confession of a *Secret Sin* is to be further divulged, it is to be examin'd whether the Sin may not be told, without the name of the person that has committed and confessed it.

6. A Minister of the Gospel, receiving of a *Confession*, oftentimes has cause to consider, whether the person that makes it, may not make his *knowledge* thereof, many ways injurious to (the said Minister) *himself* ; and so he may with his best prudence provide against such *Injuries*.

7. In those *Land defiling sins*, where a person is not bound by a *Confession* to deliver himself up to the hazard of the Law, no Minister is bound, from the meer nature of the crimes to *betray* the *Confession* that has been made unto him.

C A S E X I X. A Q U E S T I O N.

What is the Duty owing from the Church, to persons who upon PRIVATE PREJUDICES Withdraw from the Communion of it ?

1. **P**ERSONS that have taken up any *private prejudices* against any in the Communion of the Church, whereto they do belong, are directed by the *Commandment* of the Lord Jesus Christ, and are Engaged by the *Covenant* of Watchfulness, to Endeavour the *Repentance* of the persons under supposed Offence, by a *personal application*.

2. They that upon *Offences taken*, do neglect this way of proceeding, are guilty of Sin against

gainst the Lords Commandment, and their own Covenant, and by their withdrawing from the Table of the Lord, their Sin is aggravated.

3. The *Withdraw* of persons thus irregularly from the Communion of the Church, at the Lords Table, does carry an hard and high Imputation upon the Church it self, which adds more of a fault unto so sinful a Schism.

4. If the Person that hath been Offended, hath done his duty, and either the Pastor do refuse to lay the matter before the Church for the Insignificancy of it, or the Church upon the hearing of the matter do pronounce it satisfied; The person is obliged still to continue his Communion with the Church, unless a Council of Churches declare the contrary.

5. Such a sinful Separation from the Communion of the Church, being a moral evil, the Scandal is to be by the Discipline of the Church proceeded against as other Censurable Scandals. The Pastor upon observation and Information of the sin, is to send for the person withdrawing, and instruct, and counsel, and admonish him; And upon contumacious obstinacy, the Church is to deal with him, as one Unruly, and walking disorderly.

6. Nevertheless, Compassion towards the Ignorant, or Injured, is very much to determine the more or less vigour wherewith such Offences are to be prosecuted.

CASE XX.

A QUESTION.

What Loan of Money upon USURY may be Practised?

1. **U**Sury being an *Advance* on any thing lent by Contract, it is not restrained unto *Money* only. *Victuals*, or any other thing (as the Oracles of the Sacred Scripture declare unto us) are capable of being *Lent upon Usury*. The main difference of *Usury* from other ways of *Dealing*, is the Owners not running the Risk of the *Principal*.

2. That there is an *Usury* lawful to be taken, is from several passages in the Divine Law, sufficiently signified unto us. For first, under the *Old Testament*, God allowed unto his people the practice of *Usury*; he expressly said, Deut. 23. 20. *Unto a Stranger thou mayst lend upon Usury*. And the Allowance of *Usury* upon a *Stranger* had never been given, if *Usury* had in it any *Intrinsick Turpitude*; yea, in all the places of the *Old Testament*, prohibiting unto the *Israelites*, the demand of *Usury upon a brother*; there are clauses in the Context, which may seem to Intimate, as if the *poor Brother* only were intended in the prohibition. However

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the peculiar constitution of the *Israelitish Commonwealth*, is enough to release us *Gentiles* from the obligation of the *Edicts* against *Usury*, given thereunto; and the words of the *Psalmist* and the *Prophet*, that seem to reproach *Usury*, must accordingly be expounded with a Limitation to the *Usury* which the Law had countermanded. Hence also in the *New Testament*, our Saviour has a passage of such Importance, as to give countenance in, *Mat. 25* 27. unto a *mans receiving his own with Usury*; and in the *New Testament* also, *John Baptist* in, *Luk. 3. 13.* forbad not unto the *Publicans*, that *Usury* which their *Condition of life* led them unto.

3. There is every sort of *Law*, except the *Popish*, to Justine a regulated *Usury*.

'Tis Justified by the Law of *Necessity* and *Utility*; *Humane Society*, as now circumstanced, would sink, if all *Usury* were Impracticable.

'Tis Justified by the Law of *Equity*; it is very equal that a man should partake in the benefits which his estate procures for another man. Yea, it may be the duty of another man, to give me an *Usury*; namely when he gains by my Possessions; it would be *Iniquity* in him to do otherwise: and certainly then, it cannot be a *Sin*, for me to take that which it is his duty to give.

'Tis Justified by the Law of *parity*; there is no manner of reason, why the *Usury* of *Money* should

should be more faulty, than that of any other thing; for *Money* is as really *Improveable* a thing as any other; and it is rather more than less productive of advantage to him that hath it. There can be no reasonable pretence that should bind me to lend my *Money* for nothing, rather than any other Commodity whatsoever: nor can a *Contract* in this case be more blameable, than in any other.

Nor is it contrary to the *Law of Charity*, that a man should expect something for the support & comfort of his own *Family*, for the profitable use, which other men make of those things, whereof he is himself the *Proprietor*.

4. Nevertheless the *Law of Charity* is to regulate our *Usury*, that it may not become *Unlawful*, by the biting *Extremity*, into which it may otherwise be carried.

It is an eternal and a glorious Rule of *Charity*, that in dealing with a Neighbour, a man must propose his Neighbours advantage, as well as his own, and he should not propose to make his own advantage, by adding to his Neighbours misery. Moreover, when the general Rules of *Charity* oblige a man to relieve the Necessities of a Neighbour, and to remit of what he might have exacted from a Neighbour, if it had not been for these Necessities; *Usury* must not supersede that *Charity*.

Whence also, to demand *Usury* from the

Poor, when we accommodated them for their meer necessary *Sustenance and Subsistence*, is a sin; 'tis a sin likewise to refuse helping the *Poor*, because we would keep all that we have to serve the designs of *Usury*.

Nor can it be any other than a *sin*, to require as much for *Usury* as for *Hire*; which are carefully to be distinguished; And an *Idle Usury*, which is when men to confine themselves to the way of living upon *Usury*, as to render themselves otherwise *unuseful* unto the Publick: This is justly become a thing of an evil character. But yet in all these things, the Application of the *Rules of Charity*, is to be left unto a mans own *Conscience*, which is to be advised from the Word of God, with the best helps of understanding that Word.

All these things being thus consider'd, the several declamations of the *Ancients* against *Usury*, must be of no farther account with us, than their discourses against *Limning*, or *Swearing*, or *Fighting*, or *Sitting*, and *Acting* in a Court of *Civil Judicature*.

CASE XXI.

A QUESTION.

Whether it be in the power of men to Stagnate
DAYES of Religious Worship?

1. **N**O Time is to be made Holy to the Lord, but what is made Holy by the Lord: and if there be no Institution of God, the Great Lord of Time, for a Stated Time to be made Holy to himself, 'tis a Superstition in any man to make it so.

2. Very sensible is the difference between Taking a Time, to do a Sacred Work, and Doing a Work to keep a Stated Time; The Light of Nature tells us, there must be a Time for every work; but it is only the Fourth Commandment of God, that separates one time from the rest, for the constant performance of Religious Work upon it.

3. To esteem any good work the better for its being done on such or such a Return of Time, which God hath not in His Word set apart for it, is to make the Time itself a part of the Worship; and it is an unwarrantable Imposing upon Heaven with our own Inventions.

4. Solemn *Humiliations*, and *Thanksgivings* are moral duties to be observed, *Pro causis et temporibus*. And the Direction of Divine Providence, in laying before us the *Fresh Occasions* of them, is to be regarded ; which cannot be done, if they be made *Perpetual*.

5. The Church of *Israel*, kept no days of *Religious Worship*, except what were of *Divine Institution*. The days of *Purim* are by a different Hebrew word for them plainly intimated, to have been of no other Character, than *Political Commemorations* ; and besides, *Mordecai* who ordered them, was a *Prophet*. The feast of *Dedication* among the Jews, can have nothing pleaded for it, from the *Presence* of our Lord at it ; nor were the former *Dedications* of the Temple under any *Anniversary Commemorations*.

6. 'Tis not a *Work*, but a *Word*, that must *Sanctifie a day* ; and if an *Extraordinary work* of God, were enough to prefer one day before another, for the Devotions of Christianity, the *Protestant Kalender*, must soon be as full as the *Popish*.

7. When the Apostle blamed the *Galatians* for *Observing of Days*, which God himself had *Instituted* ; much more does he blame us, if we celebrate such days as only *Men* have *Devised*. And when the Apostle forbad the *Colossians*, to let any man *Judge them in respect of an holy day*, he suffers not us to sacrifice our *Christian Liberty*
unto

unto humane Impositions of Stated Holy days upon us, nor a Private person, to impose them upon himself.

CASE XXII.

A QUESTION.

Whether it be Lawful to Eat BLOOD?

WE judge it lawful to Eat Blood for the following Reasons.

1. Plain are the words of the Apostle. Rom. 14. 14. *I know and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of it self: In which passage, there may be respect unto those words of the Lord Jesus. Matt. 15. 11. Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth the man.*

2. The Scriptures of the New-Testament give an allowance for eating of all sorts of meat, wherein Blood is included. The Scripture speaks of him, as an Orthodox man. Rom. 14. 2. *Who believeth he may eat all things;* Intimating that it was from weakness of Faith, and ignorance in the Doctrine of the Gospel, to doubt about it. The Scripture condemns the Superstition of those, 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. *Who abstain from meats, which God had created to be received with thanksgiving; for nothing is to be refused: It nothing then sure not Blood.* The Scripture permits us

that *Liberty*. 1 Cor. 10 25. *Whatsoever is sold in the Shambles, that eat, asking no question for Conscience sake* ; now it was usual to Sell Blood in the Shambles.

3. The use of *Blood in Medicine* is not question'd: the *Spirit* and the *Powder of Blood*, is by the warrant of the Sixth Commandment, freely used for our *Health* : why then should the use of *Blood in Diet*, be any Question.

4. If a *thing Strangled* may be eaten, then *Blood* may be so too ; but Christians do not ordinarily Scruple to eat a *thing Strangled* ; And the *Eating of a thing which dies of it self* (which is the same case) was never unlawful for the Gentiles.

5. The reason of the precept forbidding *Blood* to the Jews, was meerly Ceremonial ; namely, because *Blood* was Typical of that great *Blood*, that makes Attonement for our *Sins* ; and because, being the *Organ of Life*, it must be Sacred unto God, the *Author of Life* ; now since the *Blood* of our Lord Jesus Christ has been shed, every *Precept*, which was only Ceremonial, is abrogated.

6. The forbidding of *Blood* unto Noah, Gen. 9 4. seems to have been of *Living Blood*, and for the prevention of that *Bloody* ferocious, inhumane disposition, which was then prevailing in the world ; and all the Commandments given to Noah, were not *Moral*.

7. The

7. The forbidding of *Blood* unto the Primitive Christians, *Acts 15. 13* was a *Temporary Advice*, for the avoiding of *Scandals*. It would not only have prejudiced the *Jews* against all *Christianity*, but also it should have confirm'd the *Pagans* in their *Idolatry*; for the principal intanglements of their *Idolatry* lay in these four things, *Idolatry*, *Fornication*, *Blood*, and *Strangulates*; which are else where Summ'd up in two, *the Eating things Sacrificed unto Idols*, and *committing Fornication*: To forbear these things, was to testify a *Renunciation of Heathenism*; to use any of these things among the *Heathen*, was to justify their *Devil-Worship*. Now the world is in other Circumstances; and, *Cessatio causæ, efficit ut cessaret observatio*. *Fornication* yet remaining upon other, and farther, and moral, and more general accounts a *Sim*.

CASE XXIII.

PROPOSITIONS;

Touching the Use of Significant CEREMONIES, in the Worship of God, not Instituted by Him.

I. **T**HE Signs of *Internal*, are *Parts* of *External* Worship; in both whereof, the great God hath Commanded us to *Glorifie Him*; even with our *Spirits* and with our *Bodies* which are *His*.

2. There are *Natural Ceremonies*, with which the *Light of Nature* does direct men to Worship God ; and these are to be used in the Worship of God, as far as we have the *Word of God* reinforcing, and countenancing of them.

3. Some *Ceremonies of Respect* among men are used in Exercises of Religion, but as Expressions of *Civility* to the People of God, with whom we Assemble for the Worship of God ; and these are to be distinguished from those *Actions* which we apply to the Lord himself immediately.

4. There are *Ceremonies* appointed for some signification of *Inward Graces*, and *Moral Duties*, in the Worship of God ; which without that *Appointment*, would not signifie what they do ; And it is the *Perogative* of God alone to ordain all such rites as these.

5. For men to take upon them, to declare what *Ceremonies* of Worthip, the God of Heaven shall *Accept* and *Reward* and *Bless*, otherwise than he hath himself, in his Holy Law declared, is a very *Criminal Presumption* ; And this *Pride of man*, has generally been chastised with a manifold *Curse of God*.

6. The *Second Commandment*, forbids not all *Images* (or significant Ceremonies) in the Worship of God, but, *Thy making them for thy self*.

7. The *Autharity* of our Lord Jesus Christ as
the

the glorious King, and Prophet of his Church; is prophanelly Invaded, when the Worship of God (with the Significant Ceremonies of it) is taught by the Inventions of men.

8. The Sacred Scriptures pronounce it an Argument sufficient for the rejecting and condemning of any thing in the Worship of God : If God himself hath not prescribed it. Thus, Jer. 7. 3. *They did that which I Commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.* Thus, Heb. 7. 14. *Of that Moses spake nothing.* Thus, Levit. 10. 1. *They offered strange fire before the Lord, which he Commanded them not.*

9. 'Tis very certain that under the Old Testament, there was not one Significant Ceremony allowed in the Worship of God, but what God himself had Instituted. If the Churches of the New Testament will proceed in this matter without a Divine Institution, let them then produce their Charter.

10. The Apostolical writings to the Galatians and the Colossians, forbid us to practice any Significant Ceremony in the Worship of God, which God himself had once Appointed, but now Abolished ; much less may we now Practice any which God never Appointed at all.

CASE XXIV.

PROPOSITIONS;

Concerning, SELF KILLING.

Albeit there are several Cases, wherein a man may do an *Action*, which will *Eventually* and *Unavoidably* shorten his Life; Nevertheless for a man to do any *Action* with such a *Design*, is an unlawful and a very Criminal thing. He that shall *directly intend* the *Abbreviation* of his own Life, in any *Action* whatsoever, is therein guilty of a *Murderous Action*. For,

1. By the *Law of Nature*, the Soul of man, is to affect Union with his *Body*; and no man *bates* his own *Flesh*. *Self-Killing* is contrary to that Law.

2. The *Law of Scripture*, forbids the *Shedding* of mans *Blood*, and the prohibition of *Murder* by that Law extends unto Ones own self as well as another.

3. 'Tis very certain, that in the duties enjoined by the *Second Table* of the Moral Law, every man is *firstly* concern'd for himself; and *self-love* is to give the *Measure* of our love to our *Neighbour*. He that seeks his own *Death*, do's proclaim his *hatred* of all the *World*.

4. God

4. God who has given to man, a power over the life of other Creatures, has given him no power over his own. God has preserv'd this prerogative unto himself, *I kill, and I make alive.*

5. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath commanded us to *Pray every Day* for the *Means of Life*, even our *daily Bread*: By consequence then, for life it self. But if we must pray for life, 'tis very plain, we may not shorten it.

6. While we *Live*, we have many *Opportunities* to *Glorify* the *God of our Life*, which we cannot have, when this *Life* is ended. And it is vile *Ingratitude*, *Impatience*, and *Impiety* for a man to throw away those *Opportunities*.

7. Every man is a Member of the *Community* and *Society* wherein he *Lives*; and it is an *Unrighteous* thing, for him to *deny*, and so to *destroy* at once all the *Service*, which God has made him capable of doing in that *Community*.

8. *Self-Slaughter* always proceeds from *Evil Causes*. As *Pride*, *Sorrow*, *Despair*, *Cowardise*; Things condemned in the Word of God. And no *Good Causes* can be assign'd for it, No pretences, no excuses will be found of any weight, in the ballances of true Religion.

9. Five *Suicides* are mentioned in the Bible; and every one of them are mention'd with an *Ill mark* upon them.

Corollary.

Corollary.

Hence, notwithstanding our hopes for them that under *madness*, lay violent hands upon themselves, 'tis neither *safe* nor *fit* for us to be very free, in our expressing our hopes, for those who have done so, without full evidence of such symptoms upon them, whatever may have been their former *Conversation*.

C A S E XXV.

A Q U E S T I O N.

*Whether the Games of CARDS, or DICE, be
Lawful to be used, among the Professors of the
Christian Religion?*

THere is at the least a great suspicion, brought on the *lawfulness* of these Games by the *Lottery* which they turn upon.

Lotts being mentioned in the Sacred Oracles of the Scripture, as used only in *weighty Cases*, and as an acknowledgment of God *Sitting in Judgment*, with a desire of his *Power and Providence* to be manifested, and not without an *Invocation of God* for the *end of strife*, therein implied: They cannot be made the *tools and parts* of our common *Sports*, without at least such

such an appearance of evil as is forbidden in the Word of God.

2. The *General Rules* which in all Recreations are to be observed, are so generally transgressed in these *Games*, that ordinarily it can be no other than a sin to use them.

These Diversions *Fascinate* the minds of those that practice them, at such a rate, that if ever those persons come to be Converted unto God, they^r bitterly lament the *Loss of time*, in which that practice has involv'd them. And the many other *passions* and *follies* almost inseperable from these Diversions, render the Diversions themselves to be *Sins* against the *Commandments*, which prohibit the *Evils* thereby occasioned.

3. The *Scandal* of these Games, declares it a scandalous thing for *Christians* to meddle with them.

The *Ill Character* given to these Usages, not only by *Christians* of all sorts and ranks, and in all ages, whose just invectives against them would fill Volumes; but by the sober and moral *Pagans* also; has brought them among the *things of evil report*, which by *Christians* are to be avoided. That mans heart is inordinately set upon *Play*, who had rather do things under such an *universal condemnation*, than forbear a little *play*, that may certainly be forborn without any damage at all.

4. *Gains*

4. *Gains of Money or Estate by Games*, be the *Games* what they will, are a sinful violation of the Law of *Honesty* and *Industry* which God has given us.

C A S E XXVI.

P R O P O S I T I O N S,

Touching the Respect that is due to PLACES of Publick Worship.

HOly Places were appointed under the Law of old, by the Great Lawgiver of Israel, partly to prevent Idolatry among the people, but chiefly to direct the thoughts of the faithful unto the *Messiah*, wherein God was resolved to dwell for ever. Notwithstanding

I. There is now no place which renders the Worship of God more acceptable for its being there performed. It is foretold concerning the times of the Gospel; in Zeph. 2. 11, *Men shall worship him, every one from his place.*

It is foretold in Mal. 1. 11. *In every place Incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering.*

It is foretold, in Job. 4. 24. That the Spiritual Worship of God, shall now be accepted with him, in other places as well as in Jerusalem.

We

We are commanded, in 1 Tim. 2. 8. *That men pray in every place.* There is a truth in the famous Dr. *Ushers* observation, *In times of Persecution, the Godly did often meet in Barns, and such obscure places, which were indeed publick, because of the Church of God there, as wherever the Prince is, there is the Court, though it were in a poor Cottage.*

There were parts of Worship in the *Mosaick Padagogy*, which could not be performed any where but at the *Holy Places* appointed. There are no parts of Worship confined unto any places under the *New Testament*.

They who expect the *Divine Regard* for what they do in the Worship of God, because 'tis done in this or that place, do not pray, *looking towards the Temple*; our Lord *Jesus Christ* the true *Temple of God*, is therein over looked.

2. To prepare and repair Places for the *Publick Worship* of God, and keep those places in such a condition, that they be not unfit for the *Solemn Exercises of Religion*; This is but an act of Obedience to him, who when he requires *Worship* from us, doth also suppose that there must be places for it; but the setting of those places off, with a *Theatrical Gaudiness*, does not favour of the Spirit of a true *Christian simplicity*.

3. While the *Duties of Divine Worship* are performing in any Places, an Agreeable *Reve-*

rence is to be maintained in those places, not so much out of respect unto the Places, as unto the duties therein performed, and the persons concern'd with us in the Duties; nevertheless, the Synagogues also are to be consider'd as, *The Houses of God.*

4. To offer affronts unto Places built for the Worship of God, with design therein to affront the Worship for which they are built, is a vile Impiety; nor will the Great God, hold them guiltless, who so take His Name in vain.

5. Places intended for the Sacred Worship of God, may lawfully be put into any Civil Service, for which they may be accommodated, at the times when the Sacred Worship is not there to be attended; so far as contempt of God and his Ordinances, doth not naturally and necessarily follow thereupon; even as Courts were kept in the Synagogues among the Jews.

C A S E XXVII.

A Q U E S T I O N.

Whether Baptism is to be administred by any but the Ordained Ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ?

WE find no Commission or Permission from our Lord Jesus Christ, for any to be the Administrators of Baptism, except those, whose

whose *Work* it is, by His *Commission* to Preach the Gospel. Mat. 28. 19.

And none have a *Commission* to make the *Preaching of the Gospel* their *work*, but such as are, with the Call of the Faithful thereunto, set apart for that *work*. Rom. 10. 15.

Baptism is a *Seal* of the *Covenant*. For any but an *Officer* to apply the *Seal*, in the Name of the Great King of Heaven, is a presumptuous *Arrogance*.

Baptism is one of the *Evangelical Mysteries*. And none but *Stewards* in the House of our Lord Jesus Christ, may pretend unto the *Dispensation* of those *Mysteries*.

The *Apostolical Writings* intimate, That some are *Sent to Baptise*. Hence none are to *Baptise*, but those that are *Sent*.

II. As both the *Primitive* and the *Protestant Churches*, have signified their *Dislike* of *Baptism* Administred by *Common Hands*; thus, the *Disorder* and *Confusion*, and the *Contempt* of the *Institutions* of the Lord Jesus Christ, which would be thereby *Introduced*, is a sufficient prejudice against it.

III. The *Original* of the *Allowance* and *Countenance* given in some Churches, unto *undue Administrators* of *Baptism*, hath been from *gross Errors* in the minds of men, about

about the Necessity and Operation of that
*Sacrament, thereof, Non privatio, sed contemptus
 damnat.*

CASE XXVIII.

SENTIMENTS;

*About Authorizing Persons to Preach, where there
 are no Gathered Churches.*

QUESTION I.

WHether meet persons, designed for
 the Service of the Gospel, in places
 where no Churches are yet Settled, may not and
 should not, be Ordained thereunto?

Voted in the Affirmative.

QUESTION II.

Whether it be not Adviseable, that persons
 thus Designed, be Recommended by the
 Churches of which they are Members, unto the
 adjacent Eldership for Ordination?

Voted in the Affirmative.

QUEST.

QUESTION III.

Whether it be Convenient, for Persons to be Employed, in the *Constant Preaching* of the Gospel, without a previous *Examination*, and a *Solemn Separation* for it?

Voted in the Negative.

A PROPOSAL.

WHereas the most Heavy and Wasting *Judgments* of Heaven, upon our Distressed Land, Loudly Call upon us, no longer to Delay the Taking of some hitherto untaken steps towards the REFORMATION of our *Provoking Evils*, and the Recovery of *Practical Religion*, in our Hearts and Lives.

Among other *Expedients* in order thereunto, we cannot but Recommend it, as very Adviseable, That the several Churches, having in an INSTRUMENT proper for that purpose, made a CATALOGUE of such Things, as can Indisputably be found amiss among them, do with all seriousness and solemnity pass their VOTES, That they count such Things to be very *Offensive Evils*, and that Renouncing all Dependence on their own strength to avoid such Evils, they Humbly Ask the Help of the

Divine Grace, to Assist them in watching against the said Evils, both in themselves and in one another. And that the Church Members do often Reflect upon these their **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**, and **PROTESTATIONS**, as *Perpetual Monitors* unto them, to prevent the Miscarriages, wherewith too many Professors, are too easily overtaken.

C A S E XXIX.

A Q U E S T I O N.

Whether no Persons may be Admitted unto Baptism, but such as are Members of a Particular Church ?

It was unanimously Agreed ;

THAT such as do profess the True Christian Religion, and do not by any Fundamental Error in Doctrine, or by a Scandalous Conversation contradict that Profession ; They and their Children, do belong unto the Visible Church, and have Right unto Baptism ; Whether they be Joyned in Fellowship, with a Particular Church, or not. [Their actual and open giving up themselves with their Children, to the Lord, in the Covenant of Grace, is here also supposed, as requisite unto their actual Enjoyment of Baptism.]

A DESIGN.

HAVING seriously considered the Methods of Invigorating the *Design* to Record Illustrious and Memorable Events of *Providence*, throughout this Country; It was Agreed, That there should be Drawn up, convenient PROPOSALS, for the forwarding this *Design*, and that these *Proposals* being Printed, further care should be taken, to disperse them into the Hands of all the Ministers throughout the Land; [*which was done accordingly.*]

Certain Proposals made by the PRESIDENT and FELLOWS of *Harvard Colledge*, To the Reverend MINISTERS of the Gospel, in the several Churches of *New-England*.

IN TO Observe and Record the more Illustrious Discoveries of the Divine *Providence*, in the Government of the World, is a Design so Holy, so Useful, so justly Approved, that the too general Neglect of it, in the Churches of God, is as justly to be Lamented.

II. For the Redress of that Neglect, although all *Christians* have a Duty Incumbent on them, yet it is in a peculiar manner to be Recommended unto the Ministers of the Gospel, to

Improve the special Advantages, which are in their Hands, to Obtain and Preserve, the Knowledge of such notable Occurrents, as are Sought out by all, that have Pleasure in the Great Works of the Lord.

III. The Things to be Esteemed *Memorable*, are especially, all *Unusual Accidents*, in the *Heaven*, or *Earth*, or *Water*: All Wonderful *Deliverances* of the Distressed: *Mercies* to the *Godly*: *Judgments* on the *Wicked*: and more *Glorious Fulfilments* of either the *Promises*, or the *Threatnings*, in the *Scriptures of Truth*; with *Apparitions*, *Possessions*, *Enchantments*, and all *Extraordinary Things*, wherein the *Existence* and *Agency* of the *Invisible World*, is more sensibly demonstrated.

IV. It is therefore Proposed, That the Ministers throughout this Land, would Manifest their Pious *Regards*, unto the *Works of the Lord*, and the *Operation of His Hands*, by Reviving their Cares to take Written Accounts, of such **REMARKABLES**; but still well attested with *Credible* and *Sufficient Witnesses*.

V. It is desired, That the Accounts thus taken of these *Remarkables*, may be sent in, unto the **PRÆSIDENT**, or the **FELLOWS** of the *Colledge*; by whom they shall be carefully *Reserved*

served, for such an Use to be made of them, as may by some fit Assembly of Ministers, be judged most Conducing to the Glory of God, and the Service of His People.

VI. Though we doubt not, that *Love to the Name of God*, will be Motive enough unto all Good Men, to Contribute what Assistance they can, unto this Undertaking; yet for further Encouragement, some Singular *Marks of Respect*, shall be Studied, for such Good Men, as will actually assist it, by taking Pains, to Communicate any Important Passages proper to be Inserted in this Collection.

Increase Wather	President
James Allen	
Charles Morton	} Fellowes,
Samuel Willard	
Cotton Wather	
John Leberett	
William Brattle	
Rehemiah Walter,	

CAMBRIDGE

March, 5th.

1693, 4.

CASE

1743
made to about 1000 in 1743 for the purpose of
the **CASE XXX.**

The Judgment of the Ministers, met at Boston,
May 11. 1699. Upon a Case addressed
unto them, Concerning Lotteries.

I, **G**reat is the Difference, between, a Lottery set up, by persons acting in a *Private Capacity*; and a Lottery set up, by the *Government*, who have power to lay a Tax upon the People, but choose to leave unto the more easy Determination of a Lottery, the Persons, who shall pay the Sum which the Necessities of the Publick require. A *Parliamentary Lottery* takes only from the *Voluntary*, what the Government might have demanded, with a more general *Imposition*; and only when the people are plunged into such Distress, that a more General *Imposition* would be grievous to them; and it Employes for the welfare of the Publick, all that is thus Raised by the Lottery. Whereas a more *Private Lottery*, is managed, by those that have no Antecedent claim unto any thing of their Neighbours, and it is designed merely for *Private Advantage*.

II. It is a principle Embraced among all Well-informed Christians, That no *Calling* is *Lawful*

Lawful, but what is *Useful* unto Humane Society, in some of its Interests. Except there be in a *Calling*, some Tendency, to make an Addition unto the Enjoyments and Interests of *Humane Society*, no Christians may set it up. The Oracles of Heaven, tell us, Christians must *Learn to Profess Honest Trades for Necessary uses*. To set up a *Lottery* is to set up a *Calling*. But though this or that particular man may be a Gainer; yet it would puzzle any man to tell, what Necessary, or Convenient *Uses*, of Humane Society, where the *Lottery* is opened, are at all Served. The *Minds*, the *Bodies*, the *Riches*, the *Defence*, or the *Regular Delights*, of Humane Society, have by this *Lottery*, no Addition made unto them.

III. Not only the *Undertakers* of a *Lottery*, have a certain Gain unto themselves, from Humane Society; but so likewise have They, who in the *Lottery*, draw the *Tickets of Benefit*; and every one that Ventures, doth it with a Desire to fall upon those *Tickets* in the Drawing. 'Tis very certain, That for this *Benefit*, none of these can pretend, that they do any one Thing *Beneficial* to Humane Society. They only Hire the *Undertakers*, to Transfer the Estates of others unto them, without any Service done by them, to the Interests of any others

others under Heaven. But we do not judge This pleasing unto God, that mens Rights be ordinarily Transferred from one to another, meerly in a way of Reference to Divine Providence, without considering any Service therein intended unto the Community, or any Help to mankind in its true Interests. Nor is venturing in a *Lottery* on shore, of the same Nature with venturing in a *Merchandise* at Sea.

IV. In a *Lottery* so contrived, that when all the *Prizes* be drawn, they do not make up, and fetch out, near the whole Sum that was deposited by the *Adventurers*, there is a plain *Cheat* upon the People. The *Undertakers* in such a *Lottery*, only Resolve to pillage the people of such a considerable Sum; and Invite a Number to Assist them in their Action, with *Hopes* of going Shares with them in the Advantage; and such is the Corruption of mankind, that the meer *Hopes* of getting the Riches of other men, without the doing of any Service to them for it, will Engage men to run the Hazard of being Loosers.

Upon the whole; We cannot Approve it that any particular persons do either undertake, or countenance any such *Lotteries*, as have been sometimes practised in other places. And the danger which there is, lest the Lusts
of

of men, once engaged in these *Lottories*, proceed unto a multitude of other Disorders, to the Ruine of their Employments and their Families, does further move us, to withhold our Approbation from them.

A T A
General Meeting of

MINISTERS

FROM

Diverse parts of the Province of the
Massachusetts Bay; Assembled at
Boston, May 27. 1697.

[The Following Instrument, was generally Signed;
Which is here Inserted and Published,
In Perpetuam Rei Memoriam.]

WE Ministers of the Gospel, in the Churches of *New-England*, being made Sensible of the Tendencies, which there are among us, towards Deviations from the Good Order, wherein our Churches have according to the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ, been happily Established and Continued :

Do

Do here Declare and Subscribe, our full Purpose, by the Help of our Great Lord, to maintain in our several Places, the Purity, and Fellowship, and Liberties of our Churches, upon all those Principles, which we apprehend Essential to the Congregational Church-Discipline, hitherto Professed in these Churches. And, that we will in matters of Moment calling for it, mutually Advise, and Assist, and Harken to, each other in the Lord.

Increase	Wather
William	Hubbard
Charles	Worton
James	Allen
Samuel	Torrey
Samuel	Willard
Samuel	Cheever
Moses	Fiske
Joseph	Ekabrook
Jabez	For
Jeremiah	Shepard
Thomas	Clark
Peter	Thacher,
&c. &c. &c.	

With many more.

F A R T



ERRATA.

PAGE 28. line 15. for reserved read
referred. Pag. 43. l. 12. f. Word r. Work.

